



U.S. Department of Justice

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MEDIA RELEASE
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OPERATION STREETSWEEPER

QUEEN CITY MAN INDICTED FOR COCAINE DISTRIBUTION

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE: U.S. Attorney Tom Colantuono, New Hampshire Attorney General Kelly Ayotte, and Manchester Police Chief John Jaskolka announced today that on June 16, 2004, a federal grand jury in the District of New Hampshire handed up an indictment charging Mark C. Bennett, 43, of Manchester, with four counts of cocaine distribution. According to the indictment, Bennett distributed crack cocaine or powder cocaine on four occasions from November 13 to November 19, 2003, in Manchester. Bennett, age 43, is a Manchester resident.

Bennett was arraigned today before U.S. Magistrate Judge James R. Muirhead. Trial was set for October 5, 2004. Bennett faces up to 30 years imprisonment and a fine on each of the four counts.

This matter was investigated by the New Hampshire Attorney General's Drug Task Force and the Manchester Police Department as part of Operation Streetsweeper, a federal program administered by the United States Attorney's Office to reduce street-level drug distribution in New Hampshire's larger cities. The prosecution is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Morse.

An indictment is only an allegation and not proof of criminal conduct. As in all criminal cases, each defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.